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SUBJECT: UN BRIEFING NOTE ON FIELD OPERATIONS
MARCH 4-10, 2009

¶1. On March 16, 2009, Security Council President Dabbashi (Libya) transmitted the following Briefing Note to the Security Council on UN field operations covering the period of March 4-10, 2009.

Africa

--Burundi (BINUB): Despite continued efforts within the framework of the Joint Verification and Monitoring Mechanism (JVMM), no progress was made in the implementation of the Comprehensive Ceasefire Agreement including the official start of the DDR process and the separation of children associated with the FNL. The FNL had also not yet submitted a certified list of combatants to be assembled in the pre-Assembly Areas. The Government's Technical Coordination Team to oversee the DDR process had not yet been established and the revised Presidential decree on the status of FNL combatants has not been promulgated. On 5 March, the Minister of Interior met with 29 registered political parties to discuss how to improve relations between political parties, local administrators and law enforcement agencies. With regard to the FNL's application to be registered as a political party, the Ministry of Interior announced on 9 March that the separation of the military and political wings of the movement was a precondition for its registration.

--Central African Republic (BONUCA): On 5 and 6 March, mass civilian protests broke out in Bangui, following an alleged killing of a local police commissioner by a Presidential Guard. Presidential Guards were subsequently dispatched to pacify the protests and

reportedly used live munitions. On 7 March, a civil society organization organized a small protest in front of the Libyan Embassy in Bangui against recent attacks in the northern provinces of the Central African Republic (CAR) by the FDPC rebel group, whose leader Abdoulaye Miskine is based in Libya. On the same day, members of the DDR Steering Committee visited northwestern town of Bouar in order to hand to the rebel fighters encamped in that town registration forms for the planned DDR process. On 8 and 9 March, President Francois Boziz visited the Libyan Arab Jamahiriya to discuss the situation in the CAR.

--Chad/CAR (MINURCAT): On 5 March, a spokesperson for the Union des Forces de la Resistance (UFR) stated that the announcement of an ICC arrest warrant for Sudanese President Omar Al-Bashir was "unjust and disproportionate" and blamed President Dby for the crisis in Darfur. Despite low-level agitations, the only reported demonstration in favour of the ICC decision took place peacefully in Djabal IDP camp, Goz Beida, on 5 March. As of 7 March, MINURCAT had deployed 567 out of 850 trained Dtachement Intgr de Scurit (DIS) elements in eastern Chad. The provision of communication equipment for DIS continued. To date, VHF repeaters and radios with coverage of up to 45 km have been installed in DIS vehicles deployed in 12 police posts and 6 police stations. On 7 March, EUFOR informed that it would not conduct operations within 10 km of the Chad-Sudan border, citing the mounting tension between the two countries and the need to avoid interference with Arme Nationale Tchadienne (ANT) operations. During the reporting period, MINURCAT confirmed the presence of a number of wounded soldiers among the Justice and Equality Movement (JEM) casualties in Iriba hospital following clashes between JEM and the Sudanese army in Muhajeria (South Darfur) in January. Also during the reporting period, the UN-contracted Minetech International (MIT) survey team conducted road verifications (Abch - Am Zoer -Guereda), and a series of destructions of Explosive Remnant of War (ERW) in Am Zoer and Maburuka (10 km south of Abch). On 6 March, MINURCAT undertook a series of activities in Abch including an HIV/AIDS sensitization campaign, a cleanup of the central prison and the inauguration of the prison's infirmary as its contribution to the Chadian National Women's Week celebrations. Meanwhile, preparations continued for the transfer of authority from EUFOR to MINURCAT on 15 March; 2400 troops will be under UN command on that date.

--Cote d'Ivoire (UNOCI): On 4 March, Prime Minister Soro officially launched the centralization of the State treasury in Bouak. The ceremony was attended by zone commanders of the Forces nouvelles (FN), representatives of the international community and UNOCI. However, the ceremony for the transfer of administrative powers from the FN zone commanders to the corps prfectoral, initially scheduled to be held on the same day, was postponed. On 4 and 5 March, SRSB Choi held meetings with President Gbagbo, the president of the opposition party Rassemblement des rpublicains, Alassane Ouattara, and the chairman of the Independent Electoral Commission (IEC) Mamb, who all indicated their commitment to hold elections in 2009. The IEC chairman stated his readiness to soon share publicly an electoral timeline, including concrete stages and a number of preconditions, such as the deployment to FN-controlled areas of magistrates for the appeals and challenges period, the further operationalization of the integrated command centre and the completion of the reconstitution of lost or destroyed civil registers. UNOCI continued to provide logistical support for the identification and voter registration operations, focusing on some 900 registration centres that have not yet opened. As of 10 March, 5.6 million Ivoirians had registered as voters, including 1.2 million in FN-controlled areas.

--Democratic Republic of the Congo (MONUC): Clashes between FDLR and FARDC were reported in different locations in North Kivu. The FDLR reportedly attacked civilians, including in Remeka (southwest of Masisi), retook its initial position in Ntoto (70 km east of Walikale) and reinforced its presence in Shabunda Territory in South Kivu. LRA attacks on civilians in Orientale Province and clashes between joint Congolese and Ugandan forces and the LRA were also reported. Meanwhile, President Kabila met with Ugandan President Museveni to discuss the joint operations in the LRA-affected areas and the strengthening of their countries' bilateral relations. On 4 March, in view of the information presented to them, ICC judges requested the prosecution to alter the charges against Jean-Pierre Bemba to take into account his responsibility as a military leader.

On 6 March, the South Kivu Amani programme thematic working groups agreed that four regrouping centres will be established in the province, where identification and registration of combatants would take place. On 9 March, President Kabila stated that the joint FARDC-RDF operations against the FDLR had been a success and that Ugandan troops would leave the DRC by the end of March. The Government of the DRC and CNDP delegations submitted draft peace agreements for SESG Obasanjo's review.

--Guinea-Bissau (UNOGBIS): A mission from the Angolan Government led by Vice Minister for External Relations Jorge Chicote visited Bissau from 3 to 4 March to assist the Government of Guinea-Bissau following the deaths of President Joco Bernardo Vieira and the Chief of General Staff, General Tagme Na Waie. At a press conference held on 5 March, the Civil Society Movement condemned the two assassinations, and appealed for the establishment of an international commission to investigate the assassinations. They further called on the Government and the international community to speed up the security sector reform process. President Vieira was buried in the municipal cemetery following his state funeral on 10 March. Earlier, there was a state funeral ceremony for the Chief of General Staff, General Tagme Na Waie, on 8 March.

--Liberia (UNMIL): On 7 and 8 March, President Ellen Johnson-Sirleaf and President Tarja Halonen of Finland co-chaired an International Colloquium for Women's Empowerment, Leadership Development, International Peace and Security in Monrovia. Several heads of state and other international dignitaries participated in the event. On 7 March, approximately 200 former Armed Forces of Liberia (AFL) soldiers violently demonstrated in Monrovia, protesting against the alleged non-payment of benefits. The Liberian National Police (LNP) Police Support Unit intervened to restore order and arrested 23 demonstrators. On the same day, some 800 demonstrators gathered in Monrovia, calling for President Johnson Sirleaf to be tried for alleged war crimes in connection with a monetary donation given to Charles Taylor's National Patriotic Front of Liberia by an organization to which she belonged.

--Sierra Leone (UNIPSIL): The Sierra Leone Peoples Party (SLPP) held its Convention in Kenema from 6 to 8 March. In addition to ratifying a new constitution, the party conducted elections for its 31 member executive council. Mr. John Benjamin, a former Finance Minister, was elected as the new Chairman of the party while the present Secretary-General, Mr. J.J. Saffa, running unopposed, retained his position. The Convention highlighted a clear divide within the party between former President Kabbah and his Vice President, Mr. Samuel Berewa, and their supporters. Their relationship has become increasingly strained since Mr. Berewa's defeat in the 2007 presidential elections.

--Somalia (UNPOS): President Sharif began a two day official visit on 8 March to Kenya where he held discussions with his Kenyan counterpart on security issues. President Sharif reportedly vowed to do all in his power to restore peace and stability to Somalia, and seek regional support to that end. He also asked the Somali community in Kenya to contribute to the restoration of public services and infrastructure in Somalia. In a meeting in Cairo, the League of Arab States foreign ministers welcomed the progress made by Somalia's President Sheikh Sharif Ahmed on reconciliation in the country. The foreign ministers urged the President to continue with his efforts, stating that they would condemn any steps meant to disrupt the process.

A mass rally was held in Mogadishu by religious leaders and elders in support of the peace process and the government of President Sharif. On 4 March, a well known Somali cleric of the Ahlu Sunna Waljamia Islamist organization, Sheik Ali Afyare, was shot dead by three masked men armed with pistols. The motive behind the killing is not known, but it is believed to revolve around the ongoing power struggle in central Somalia between the Ahlu Sunna waljamia and al-Shabaab. On 9 March, the DSRSG and the UNPOS Military Advisor visited Mogadishu for a one day mission. They met several ministers at the AMISOM HQ in Mogadishu and discussed critical priorities of the new government.

At least 12 people have died following an outbreak of acute watery diarrhea (AWD) in villages around the regional capital of Jowhar, 90km north of Mogadishu. At least 40,000 displaced Somalis have

returned to Mogadishu over the past six weeks.

--Sudan (UNMIS and UNAMID):

On 4 March, the Pre-Trial Chamber of the International Criminal Court (ICC) issued an arrest warrant for Sudanese President Omar Al-Bashir for war crimes and crimes against humanity. From 4 March and lasting throughout the reporting period, demonstrations took place in Khartoum in support of President Bashir and against the ICC. They were controlled and non-violent. On the same day as the ICC announcement, the National Congress Party (NCP) denounced the ICC, but assured continued cooperation with the UN while warning against any entity exceeding its mandate in Sudan. On 5 March, Sudan's Humanitarian Aid Commission (HAC) revoked the registrations of 13 INGOs and two national NGOs for allegedly collaborating with ICC investigations. At the same time, Government authorities also requested the agencies hand over lists of assets and began seizing project materials in various locations. The expulsion has created a significant gap in the provision of humanitarian assistance throughout Sudan; initial estimates indicate that over a million people depend on the INGOs for life-sustaining support. On 9 March, Popular Congress Party (PCP) leader Hassan Al-Turabi was released, having been arrested on 14 January. Immediately following the release, Justice Minister Abdul Basit Sabdarat dismissed allegations that Turabi's arrest had been politically motivated.

UNMIS

Throughout the reporting period, the situation in Malakal remained stable. On 8 March, a humanitarian assessment mission was launched to ascertain the condition of IDPs in Lelo, Malakal Shilluk and Werjock, but it was denied freedom of movement by the Sudan People's Liberation Army (SPLA). After the matter was reported to the SPLM authorities that same day, the Governor of Upper Nile State stipulated that an SPLA national monitor will accompany future missions to avoid such impediments. The security situation in Central Equatoria State remained tense due to four alleged LRA attacks that took place between 28 February and 6 March that resulted in 13 civilians dead, six injured and seven abducted. On 4 March in Western Bahar El-Ghazal State (20 km SW of Wau), two de-miners were injured when an SPLA soldier opened fire. They were treated at Wau Level II hospital. A Ceasefire Joint Military Commission (CJMC) investigation of the incident is underway but de-mining operations in the area have been suspended. Following the withdrawal of an SPLA logistic base from Agok (25 km SE of Abyei) on 2 March, the Sudan Armed Forces (SAF) withdrew their remaining detachment of ten soldiers from Diffra, completing the withdrawal of SAF and SPLA forces from the Abyei Roadmap Area in line with the 8 June 2008 agreement. Meanwhile, the DDR process in Blue Nile State launched on 10 February continues. As of 9 March, a total of 667 beneficiaries have been disarmed and demobilized. Construction of DDR sites in Southern Kordofan State is ongoing.

UNAMID

The overall security situation in Darfur remained relatively calm. Peaceful demonstrations supporting President Bashir took place in El Fasher, Nyala, El Geneina and Zalingei between 4 and 8 March. A rally on 8 March was attended by 20,000 people at the Government military HQ in El Fasher (North Darfur) to welcome President Bashir. On 9 March, a UNAMID patrol returning to its base in El Geneina (West Darfur) was attacked by unknown men who fired at the vehicle with small arms. Four peacekeepers were shot and wounded in the attack, one of them seriously. The injured personnel were evacuated by helicopter to the Mission's level II hospital in El Fasher where their conditions were reported as stable. Also on 9 March in El Fasher, a UNAMID vehicle was carjacked by three unidentified armed individuals in front of a PAE office near the UNAMID Headquarters. On 10 March, a UNAMID Military Observer en route from his residence to the Mission team site in El Daein (160 km SE of Nyala, South Darfur) was shot at by two armed men, but no serious injuries were reported. UNAMID is investigating these incidents. Also on 10 March, Joint Chief Mediator Bassol together with officials from the State of Qatar held a meeting in Doha with representatives of the Government of Sudan and the Justice and Equality Movement (JEM). Both parties reiterated their commitment to a peaceful and negotiated settlement to the Darfur conflict through the Doha process. Throughout the reporting period, UNAMID military and police conducted routine confidence-building, escort and night patrols throughout all sectors.

Asia and Middle East

--Afghanistan (UNAMA): In a press conference on 7 March, President Karzai accepted the Independent Electoral Commission's 4 March decision confirming 20 August as the date for the elections. From 8-9 March, SRSG Eide visited Teheran to discuss Iran-Afghanistan cooperation. On 9 March, he addressed the Economic Cooperation Organization's Council of Ministers meeting in Teheran. On 4 March, in the central province of Parwan, a suicide attack against a convoy in the vicinity of an international military forces base injured three contractors travelling in the convoy. On 7 March, in the southern province of Nimroz, a suicide attack against an Afghan National Police (ANP) station killed two ANP officers and one civilian, and injured two ANP officers. The suicide attacker was wearing an Afghan National Army (ANA) uniform. On 8 March, in the southeastern province of Paktya and the southern province of Kandahar, improvised explosive devices killed a total of two international military forces officers and wounded another five.

India and Pakistan (UNMOGIP): During the reporting period, tension remained on the Indian-administered side of the Line of Control after the reported killing of two youths in Baramulla District in February. On 6 March, one person was reportedly killed and at least 30 others injured in clashes between protesters and the police in Srinagar and Baramulla District. On 9 March, two suspected militants were reportedly killed in a conflict-related incident in Poonch District.

--Iraq (UNAMI): On the occasion of the International Women's Day on 8 March, UNAMI's SRSG urged Iraqi government to marshal resources to ensure women's rightful access to education and health care, and offered a UN support to assist in building a 'national strategy' safeguarding women's rights.

As part of the UN Country Team's new Marshlands Initiative, DSRSG/HRD hosted the Minister of the Marshlands at a workshop with members of the UNCT to outline a development roadmap for the area. Eight UN agencies are currently cooperating in the Marshlands Initiative, which will bring capacity development and stronger social services to this highly under-developed part of Iraq.

On 5 March, the Iraqi parliament passed a US\$58.8 billion budget for 2009 representing a 7% cut from the original plan amid decreasing oil revenues. During the reporting period, Iraqi Prime Minister al-Maliki addressing Iraq's chieftains conference in Baghdad called for a 'comprehensive national reconciliation' urging Iraqis to forgive those who served in the former regime.

--Lebanon (UNIFIL): UNIFIL discovered an old defensive position in Wadi Hamul (Sector West) on 5 March, and two old defensive positions in Umm Al Ammad (Sector West) on 7 March. Nothing suspicious was found in either case. On 5 March, the Lebanese Armed Forces (LAF) fired warning shots in the air after a civilian vehicle failed to stop at a checkpoint in the vicinity of Tyre (Sector West). On 6 March, the LAF apprehended two Lebanese civilians suspected of smuggling contraband in the vicinity of Rmeich (Sector West) for investigation. Meanwhile, UNIFIL periodically observed civilians armed with hunting rifles in the area of operations. On one occasion, a UNIFIL patrol monitoring the movements of two civilians carrying hunting rifles was momentarily obstructed by two civilian vehicles in the vicinity of Marun Ar Ras (Sector West). During the reporting period, UNIFIL observed 46 violations of Lebanese airspace by the Israel Defense Forces, including 12 by fixed-wing aircraft and 34 by drone.

--Lebanon (UNSCOL): A ceremony was held on 9 March to mark the start of the reconstruction of the Palestinian refugee camp Nahr el Bared, which was destroyed in 2007 during fighting between Fatah el Islam and the Army. The beginning of the reconstruction is on target and has been made possible by intensive rubble-removal efforts and de-mining.

--Nepal (UNMIN): On 10 March, the Maoist army (MaoA) leadership issued a press statement suspending a controversial troop recruitment drive after the Supreme Court issued a temporary stay order to the Government of Nepal and the Army Integration Special Committee (AISC) to halt recruitment by both the Nepal Army (NA) and

MaoA. There has been no word on whether the NA would also suspend its recruitment of new soldiers, which UNMIN has stated is against the Comprehensive Peace Agreement and other related political accords. The Supreme Court is expected to rule on this politically highly sensitive issue soon. Meanwhile, PM Prachanda held informal talks with leaders of the ethnic Tharu groups, in response to their protest against being classified as one of the Madhesi cast/ethnic groups in a government ordinance on inclusiveness. The continuing strikes called by the various Tharu groups have paralyzed daily life in the southern Tarai plains.

--Timor-Leste (UNMIT): On 4 March, the Council of Ministers approved the nomination of opposition Fretilin Secretary-General Mari Alkatiri as Timor-Leste's special envoy to explore possibilities for technical assistance for reconciliation and stabilization in Guinea-Bissau in coordination with the Community of Portuguese-speaking Countries. On 5 March, Mario Carrascalco of Partido Social Democratico, Cristiano da Costa of Unidade Nacional Democrtica da Resistncia Timorese and Jose Carrascalco of Associagco Social Democrtica Timorese were sworn in as Vice-Prime Minister, Vice-Minister for Economy and Development and Vice-Minister for Infrastructure, respectively. On the same day, the first meeting of the Democratic Governance Forum series for 2009 was held in Dili with the theme "Let's Talk with Our Leaders" and with President Ramos-Horta as its guest of honour. During a visit to Timor-Leste on 6 March, Australian Defence Minister Joel Fitzgibbon opened an Australian-funded military training centre to be used for training of the Timorese military. During his four-day visit to Japan, Prime Minister Xanana Gusmco reportedly requested the Japanese Government to provide assistance in training the Timorese military and Japanese loans to expedite improvement of basic infrastructure in Timor-Leste. Japan reportedly agreed to receive Timorese military personnel to study at the Japanese National Defence Academy starting in April 2010.

--Western Sahara (MINURSO): On 5 March, MINURSO notified the parties of the violations of military agreement No. 1 committed since the beginning of 2009, as follows: the Royal Moroccan Army committed four violations when it twice failed to provide advance notification of military exercises in the limited restriction area, when military personnel and equipment entered the buffer strip, and when it diverted a section of trenches from their original path; the Frente Polisario committed one violation of military agreement No. 1 when some of its military personnel entered the buffer strip. Morocco concluded a month-long voter registration campaign for the municipal elections scheduled for 12 June 2009, which are set to include the part of the Territory controlled by Morocco, west of the berm.

Europe and Latin America

--Cyprus (UNFICYP): The Island's two leaders met for another round of discussions on property matters on 5 March. The situation in the buffer zone has remained calm and stable with no serious incident reported.

--Georgia (UNOMIG): The Mission observed the presence of armed forces and heavy equipment in the zone of conflict, in contravention of Article 2 (a) of the 1994 Moscow Agreement. On the Abkhaz-controlled side of the ceasefire line, UNOMIG observed the presence of the forces of the Russian Federation with the strength of approximately a battalion with 32 BTR-80 armoured personnel vehicles and ten T-72 tanks. The Abkhaz side continued to maintain two army platoons with seven T-55 tanks and other heavy equipment in the security zone. Russian military helicopters were also observed flying over the security zone. On the Georgian-controlled side, UNOMIG reported the presence of 22 Joint Light Tactical Vehicles. The Mission continued to raise with both sides the need to ensure respect for the Article 2(a) of the Moscow Agreement as provided for in Security Council resolution 1866 (2009).

--Haiti (MINUSTAH): On 9 March, UN Secretary-General, Ban Ki-moon, and former U.S. President Bill Clinton arrived in Haiti for a two day visit. They met with President Prval to discuss the socio-economic situation in the country, observing that Haiti offers important opportunities for investment, job creation and economic growth. In the wake of that meeting, a joint communiqu was issued highlighting the need for the international community to continue to

assist Haiti and for the Haitian authorities to take the appropriate measures to ensure a favorable climate to attract potential investors. On 4 March, an estimated 1,000 people demonstrated in Port-de-Paix (North-West Department) to protest the alleged embezzlement of funds, allocated for road repairs, by the local mayor. The protestors erected barricades and threw stones. MINUSTAH assisted the Haitian National Police at the event. On March 9, the Tribunal des Rfres announced its decision in the case of Fanmi Lavalas against the Provisional Electoral Council (CEP). The tribunal decided in favor of Fanmi Lavalas' appeal against their exclusion from the senatorial elections. Later that day, the CEP issued a statement in which it reaffirmed its exclusive competence on any electoral matter, including electoral litigation and complaints.

--Kosovo (UNMIK): This week, EULEX judges started their first trial at the courthouse in Mitrovica, following earlier Kosovo Serb protests in front of the courthouse. The trial took place without interruptions. On 5 March, the Kosovo Police Commander, accompanied by the head of EULEX Police, paid a visit to Gate 1 in northern Kosovo. Hundreds of Kosovo Serbs gathered to protest the visit, blocking the roads and the entrance to police stations in the north. Throughout the week, Kosovo Serbs from villages in central and eastern Kosovo demonstrated against the decision of the Kosovo Energy Corporation (KEK) to cut off electricity supply in the respective communities due to unpaid bills. The demonstrators clashed with the Kosovo Police as they tried to block main roads. The Serbian Ministry of Internal Affairs asked UNMIK to investigate the reasons for the power cuts as well as allegations of excessive use of force by the Kosovo Police, while the Serbian Minister for Kosovo called for urgent UNMIK and EULEX involvement in finding a solution for the electricity problems of the Kosovo Serb community. On 10 March, KEK restored power supply in one Kosovo Serb village after nine days; demonstrations over the electricity cuts continued elsewhere.

End text.

[13](#). Minimize considered.

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